

7 RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SHORT-TERM USES AND LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

This chapter discusses the relationship between the proposed project's short-term use of the environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity. The impacts from utilization of resources associated with the proposed project are given in Chapter 4. For this EIS, *short-term* refers primarily to the period of construction, the time when the most extensive environmental impacts are likely to occur.

Although none of the alternative routes require the short-term disturbance or long-term alteration of a major amount of land, the loss of terrestrial and wetland plants, animals, and habitats to accommodate the new facilities and the temporary disturbance of these resources during construction would occur. Land clearing and construction activities resulting in personnel and equipment moving about an area would disperse wildlife and temporarily eliminate habitats. Most of the ROWs for the alternative routes are actively managed and harvested timberlands. Nevertheless, short-term disturbances to previously undisturbed biological habitats (such as wetlands) from the construction of the transmission line could cause long-term reductions in the biological productivity of an area. ATV and maintenance vehicle use of the transmission line ROW could cause long-term negative effects on vegetation. Changes in the types and patterns of recreational usage can be viewed as positive or negative, depending on the subjective values of the interested and affected public.

The proposed project's impacts on previously undisturbed land would affect long-term visual resources and possibly some cultural resources. However, a large portion of each alternative route crosses commercial forest lands, where unaltered views are limited. Use, productivity, and resource commitment related to archaeological and historic properties would be negligible.

Improved electricity reliability within the NEPOOL service area would be expected to contribute to long-term socioeconomic benefits, including business development and regional population growth.